

HABS No. CA-1548-Q

U.S. Naval Hospital, Executive Officer's Quarters (Quarters B)
Park Boulevard, Balboa Park
San Diego
San Diego County
California

HABS
CAL.
37 SANDI,
27-Q-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Western Region
Department of the Interior
San Francisco, CA 94102

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
U.S. NAVAL HOSPITAL,
[EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S QUARTERS (QUARTERS B)]
at the
U.S. Naval Hospital
San Diego, California

HABS No. CA-1548 Q
Title Sheet

HABS
CAL,
37-SANDI,
27-Q-

Location: U.S. Naval Hospital Reservation, Spear Drive, a continuation of Stitt Avenue, off Park Boulevard in Balboa Park. City and County of San Diego, California, 92134
USGS Point Loma 1975 Quadrangle
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 11.486200.3620400.

Owner and Occupant: Built in 1928 for the United States Navy. Residence for high-ranking medical officer stationed at a hospital serving Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard personnel, retirees, and dependants.

Statement of Significant: THE ARCHITECTURAL/HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE OF QUARTERS B

The buildings of the original U.S. Naval Hospital in San Diego, considered as a landscaped ensemble, form a regionally significant work of historical architecture. The group is noteworthy for its harmonious architectural styling, unified planning, and spectacular siting.

The plan for the Hospital complex included single-family residences for the senior medical officers. Those officers' residences were distinct from the major buildings of the group. Quarters B is the most prominent of those residences. (A commanding officer's quarters, a Quarters A, was never built on the Hospital grounds.)

This building's two-story vernacular domestic form and Spanish-style details are not individually significant. It is a contributing structure in the Hospital group.

Historians: William Rutledge, employee of the Western Division office of the Naval Facilities Engineering Command (successor to the Navy's Bureau of Yards and Docks), and Donald Ferris, AIA, San Diego, under contract to the Navy.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection:

One of ten buildings under construction from 1927 to 1928. (Date of plans Jan. 27, 1927.)

2. Architect:

Staff architects of the U.S. Navy Bureau of Yards and Docks, Washington O.C. Original drawings signed "HART". A later drawing June 13, 1927, for extra foundation reinforcing steel by draftsman in 11th Naval District Public Works Office, was signed "H.C.P.".

Please see accompanying narrative report for the discussion titled "Credits for Designing the Hospital".

3. Construction contractors:

The U.S. Navy put the plans out for bids from private construction firms. The Navy contract number was NOy-84 and the Specification Number was 5148. The original cost of Quarters B was \$26,575. The name of the construction firm is not recorded.

4. Documents Concerning Original Construction:

A set of paper prints of the original construction drawings are in the Hospital Public Works Office; microfiche negatives of the same paper prints are in the Navy Public Works Center (22nd Street) Plan Files Room; and another set of the same paper prints, plus subcontractors' working drawings, in the Laguna Niguel National Archives. A bound copy of the original contract (NOy-84) is probably in the Suitland National Archives. It would include the same paper prints of the original construction drawings.

Photographs of successive stages in construction are in the Washington D.C. National Archives, Still Photographs Branch.

The photo-data section of this documentation package contains photographs of original construction drawings and the field file contains photographs of stages in construction.

5. Alterations and Additions:

Second floor rear sun room enclosed 1935 and basement casement-type windows replaced with double-hung-type in 1936. These were among the many W.P.A. projects underway at the Hospital at that time.

Quarters B remains little changed from its original appearance. The few interior changes have been along the lines of repainting re-covering floors, and upgrading functional equipment. The basement's servant quarters and garage are obsolete and no longer used for their original purposes. The few exterior changes have been mainly to screen the occupants from public view.

B. Historical Context:

The Hospital complex is one of four architecturally-important facilities the Navy built in the course of establishing San Diego as a Naval Operating Base in the 1920's.

The accompanying narrative report gives a detailed account of the events leading to the construction of the Hospital complex.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural Character:

The basic form is in the tradition of American east coast neo-classical houses: a 2-story rectangular form with entrance, entrance hall, and stairway in the middle. The ground floor has the rooms used for frequent social functions and dining. The upper floor has the family members' private rooms. The basement is for servants and storage. The basement here has a rear wall exposed, due to the sloping site, allowing an 8' wide door for a car to be garaged in the basement.

The tile roofing material and the cast stone around the entry door give the exterior enough Spanish decoration to accord with the main Hospital buildings. As in the main buildings, many of the decorative features could also be termed Italian Renaissance in style. The interior has little in the way of Spanish decorations, and the main decorative features being a living room fireplace and an entrance-hall stair-case.

2. Condition of Fabric:

The house is structurally sound. It has been conscientiously maintained, modified very little, and affected negatively in only the slightest ways, such as successive layers of paint obscuring the character of the original millwork. The growth of shrubbery has elaborated and improved the so-called "fabric" of the property.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. The foundation perimeter is a 39'-6" by 34'-2" rectangle with a 7'-10" by 10'-1" service porch on the northeast that makes the front (north) side look longer. The full basement could lead to classifying this as a 3-story house, but the main floor and main entry are at the uphill side into second level. The basement does not have full ceiling heights. The structure extends only 2 stories over the garage segment of the basement, leaving an open porch at the 3rd level.
2. The perimeter foundation is reinforced concrete on spread (inverted-T) footings. The 12" thick stem walls extend a 6' height to support the main and upper floors' hollow tile walls. The basement concrete reinforcing plan is of a slightly later date than the house plan, perhaps because this house was first planned for a level site in the north of the original Hospital plan, or perhaps as a result of some soils tests for this particular location.
3. The exterior walls are hollow tile laid with mortar. The wall-thickness is 8 inches, stuccoed on the outside and plastered on the inside. The interior partition walls are 2 x 4 stud walls 16" on center, lath and plaster on both sides.
4. Structural System:

Vertical members, in addition to the walls on spread footings, include a 12" square concrete column on a pier in the very center. The horizontal members include 2 x 10" main and second floor joists 16" on centers with 2 x 8 ceiling joists and rafters 16" on centers, all of which are unusually heavy in house construction. No diagonal members are apparent.
5. Front door is slightly recessed behind a brick-covered porch. The rear sun room can also be classified as a porch. One floor plan shows an oak floor, while another plan has a 6" reinforced concrete slab (the porch is directly over the garage) with a sloping tile floor and plastered parapet guard rail. The roof of the sun room had a sheet metal surface that could be walked upon. (Upper story bedrooms had french doors opening onto that roof.)
6. The chimneys at each gable end are functional. The west chimney twin flue (terra-cotta lined) served the large fireplace. The east chimney served the basement water heat in one flue and the kitchen range in the other.

7. The entrance door is wood, panelled, and has 3 small leaded glass lights. It has a small wrought iron grille in the decoratively-shaped transom over it. The original construction drawings illustrate the doors in detail. The windows were generally double hung, six over six. The window at the stairs has a decoratively shaped opening.
8. The timber-framed roof has a gable form across the major portion of the house with a hipped wing over the fourth bedroom. The service porch roof is flat with low parapets.

The tile roofing (known as mission tile) projects a few inches beyond the wall, over a fascia and molding strip. The gutter is half round metal with square downspouts.

The roof has no dormers. (The attic vents through decorative grilled gable-end-wall openings.)

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor Plans:

The main, first, floor has a living room, an entry hall with central stairway, kitchen, and service entry across the north side facing the Hospital, and, a dining room and a sun room (with many casement windows) facing the southern view.

The upper, second, floor has 4 bedrooms and 2 baths. The floor area is less than the main floor because there is no second floor over the sun room. The plan for the second floor is L-shaped around a roof terrace.

The lower, basement, floor has the servant's bedroom and bath, a laundry, a garage with a 8' wide garage door and interior space for one or two cars tandem, and storage rooms.

The floor plan for this house is now obsolete in having no toilet on the main floor and having cars park in tandem.

D. Site:

1. This row of houses stands on the southern slope of Inspiration Point, overlooking downtown San Diego, with the harbor and ocean in the distance. The houses are strung along approximately the same elevation on the downhill side of a street following the sidehill contour. Another, lower, contour street serves the houses' basements on their downhill sides.

The accompanying narrative report discusses the setting of the Hospital complex and the north-south arrangement of Hospital buildings along the ridge.

This was a good place for houses in the overall plan for the Hospital grounds. At the most distant (southern) end of the grounds from the entrance, the houses had quiet seclusion, a view, and generated little traffic past the main buildings. In later years the quiet was broken by increasing airport approach traffic, and, by increasing automobile traffic in the canyon below. The current noise level is unacceptable for conventional single-family housing.

2. The landscaping is identified in detail in the large-scale drawings included elsewhere in this documentation.
3. Quarters B has no outbuildings.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

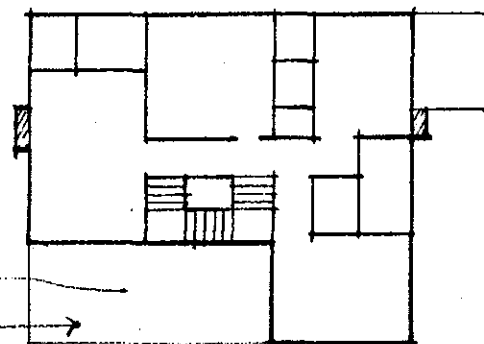
- A. Photographs of the original construction drawings are included in the accompanying photo-data set. The sources are given in Part I item 4.
- B. Early photographs of the building under construction and in use are included in the accompanying Field Records. The sources are the Washington National Archives and the San Diego Historical Society.
- C. This report was not based on interviews.
- D. The narrative report contains a bibliography.
- E. We are not aware of other likely sources of information.

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS' QUARTERS (QUARTERS B)

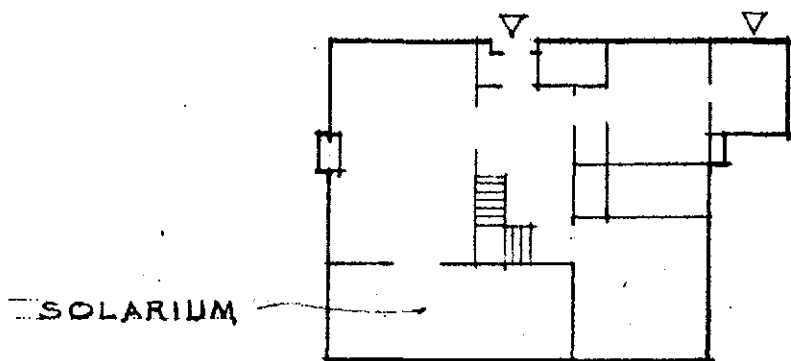
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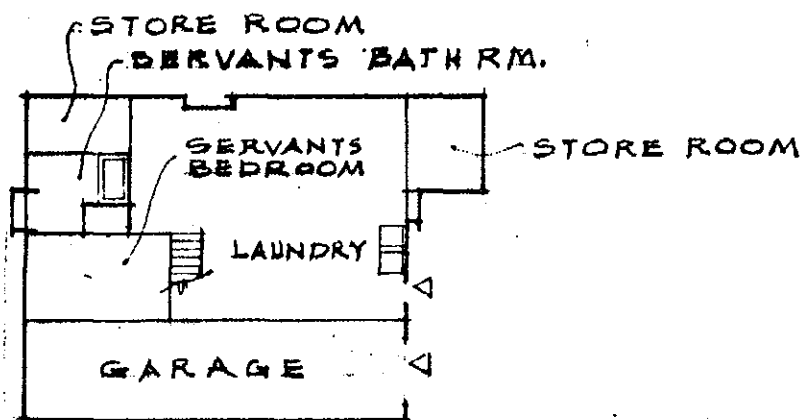
QUARTERS B & C
SIMILAR EXCEPT
AS NOTED.



SECOND FLOOR PLAN

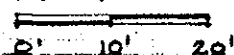


FIRST FLOOR PLAN



BASEMENT PLAN

GRAPHIC SCALE



ORIGINAL FLOOR PLANS

